

Although we constantly think about how we present ourselves to others, self-presentation is especially important in the dating world. How we dress, style our hair, the way we talk, and even how we hold our posture affect how well a date goes. However, these pressures are not felt the same by everyone. For example, bisexual women face different expectations when they date a man or a woman. Many bisexual women adjust how they dress, communicate, and present themselves depending on who they are dating—behaviours known as *bisexual display*. For example, a bisexual woman might dress less feminine when dating a man so people do not assume she is straight, something she would not worry about when dating a woman. Bisexual women do this to authentically express their identities. In this research, we wanted to know if bisexual displays ironically cause people to view bisexual women as inauthentic.

We asked participants to look at how bisexual women use bisexual displays in a dating context. In our first study, we found participants evaluated bisexual women who changed their behaviour and style of dress depending on the gender of their dating partner as less authentic, likable, and trustworthy than bisexual women who presented themselves the same way across dating situations. In a second study, we specifically asked straight men to evaluate bisexual displays in the form of dating app profiles. They judged bisexual women to be inauthentic, but not necessarily less trustworthy, likeable, or romantically desirable. One possible explanation is that bisexual women are often fetishized by straight men, so fantasies associated with their bisexuality may outweigh evaluations of their authenticity when shaping romantic interest.

This research shines a spotlight on a challenge bisexual women face when genuinely expressing themselves. The very behaviours bisexual women use to feel authentic lead them to be evaluated as inauthentic. Being recognized as authentic is important for healthy relationships, well-being, and social inclusion. It is crucial for ongoing research to understand how diverse presentations of authenticity can be recognized and valued so that everyone can have healthy relationships. If you want to learn more about this research, [read the full paper here](#).